

and coordinating with Arab nations." Ahmed al-Jarallah, editor of Kuwait's Arab Times, condemned both Hezbollah and Hamas in an editorial on July 15, 2006, writing, "Unfortunately we must admit that in such a war the only way to get rid of 'these irregular phenomena' is what Israel is doing. The operations of Israel in Gaza and Lebanon are in the interest of people of Arab countries and the international community."

I am pleased that Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice is planning a trip to the region shortly, and hope that she will remain fully engaged. In the meantime, Israel should not be asked to stop its actions as long as Hezbollah and Hamas continue to send missiles toward Israel and to hold Israeli soldiers hostage.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JOHN LINDER

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2006

Mr. LINDER. Mr. Speaker, I was unable to cast rollcall vote 382 on July 19, 2006, because I was unavoidably detained on official business at the White House. Had I been present, I would have cast the following vote: On rollcall No. 382, I would have voted "yea."

PLEDGE PROTECTION ACT OF 2005

SPEECH OF

HON. JEFF FLAKE

OF ARIZONA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2389) to amend title 28, United States Code, with respect to the jurisdiction of Federal courts over certain cases and controversies involving the Pledge of Allegiance:

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Chairman, today I voted against the Pledge Protection Act—H.R. 2389. I believe in the constitutionality of the Pledge and believe that the Pledge should contain the words "under God."

Unfortunately, this bill does more to hurt the Pledge than help it. The bill strips Federal courts of jurisdiction over Federal constitutional claims, leaving the States to each decide issues regarding the Pledge. Some States may strike down the Pledge; others may modify it. The end result would be lasting damage to the Pledge. This is clearly a Federal, constitutional issue.

I realize that, in 2002, the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals reached a disturbing result by declaring that it was an unconstitutional establishment of religion to have students recite the words "under God" in the Pledge of Allegiance. The U.S. Supreme Court overruled the ninth circuit on procedural grounds in 2004. Unfortunately, there was no clear opinion overruling the ninth circuit on substantive grounds.

The ninth circuit's ruling has created confusion as to whether the decision must be followed within the boundaries of the circuit. At least one Federal district court in California

has since ruled that it must. That case is on appeal now to the ninth circuit, and hopefully it will make its way to the U.S. Supreme Court for a reversal.

COMMENDING NASA ON COMPLETION OF THE SPACE SHUTTLE'S SECOND RETURN-TO-FLIGHT MISSION

SPEECH OF

HON. DAVE WELDON

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. WELDON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend congratulations to NASA and the Shuttle program for the successful STS-121 mission on Space Shuttle *Discovery*. On July 4th, I watched with pride as the NASA performed a successful launch of the Space Shuttle *Discovery*, a fitting tribute to NASA, our brave astronauts, and our incredible space program.

STS-121 successfully confirmed the Space Shuttle safety improvements, including the redesigned External Tank foam insulation, the heat shield, and improved imagery during launch. STS-121 also successfully supplied the International Space Station with more than 28,000 pounds of much-needed equipment and supplies.

Our amazing astronauts also gave us earth-bound admirers three awe-inspiring spacewalks. My hearty congratulations go to the entire *Discovery* crew—Commander Steven Lindsey, Pilot Mark Kelly, and Mission Specialists Michael Fossum, Lisa Nowak, Piers Sellers, and Stephanie Wilson.

With the completion of the flawless 13-day mission of STS-121 on Space Shuttle *Discovery*, NASA proved that both its Space Shuttle program and the International Space Station program are once again on firm footing. Americans can be confident that NASA's goal of completing the construction of the space station will be realized.

And this confidence-building mission comes at the right time, since the most complicated space assembly mission that has ever been scheduled in human space flight will happen in only a month and a half. Starting in August, NASA will launch a series of missions to finish the backbone of the International Space Station. These shuttle missions will be the most complex since the Apollo program.

These are great challenges for NASA, but America's space agency continues to prove that it is up to the job. I have complete confidence that NASA will be successful with the remaining 15 Shuttle missions to complete the space station before the shuttle's retirement in 2010.

Our Space Shuttle program has proven that it is on track to completing its remaining missions and NASA is on track to continue the manned space program, including the return of Americans to the surface of the Moon.

ARTICLE BY RABBI ISRAEL ZOBERMAN

HON. THELMA D. DRAKE

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2006

Mrs. DRAKE. Mr. Speaker, I would like to call your attention to the following article written by my constituent, Rabbi Israel Zoberman. Rabbi Zoberman is the spiritual leader of Congregation Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, VA. A son of Polish Holocaust survivors, he grew up in Haifa, Israel. He is past President of the Hampton Roads Board of Rabbis and Cantors. The article reads as follows:

Once more I felt in the pit of my stomach that gnawing sense of emptiness born of disbelief and grave concern, which after all is a defense mechanism, experienced during past wars and crises. My phone calls to my family in Haifa, Israel have increased from Fridays to wish them a "Shabbat Shalom" to daily contacts of empathy and support.

My beautiful coastal Haifa, Israel's third largest city, has become a deliberate target with rockets landing on Mt. Carmel, not far from my sisters' homes and my parents' residence where I was raised. My very pregnant niece was emotionally affected and temporarily left to Tel Aviv for psychological stability. Speaking to my mom, who along with father are Polish Holocaust survivors, conveyed her definite heightened anxiety as she faced one more challenge after already much trauma, including Israel's previous wars and ongoing tensions since arriving there in 1949. I've also been in touch with Lebanese friends in Virginia Beach. They too are affected by the disconcerting events.

The eruption of hostilities this time followed attacks and kidnappings by Hamas in the south and Hezbollah in the north, instigated by the true powers to be in Iran and Syria, and lengthy rockets' firing at Israeli towns within range from Gaza. It thus forced Israel's government to send a loud message to those who are obstacles to the future of peace, a pre-condition to Israel's very viability and survival in a restive region of critical strategic importance. No state would allow disruption to its citizens' lives on a scale tolerated so long by Israel. Particularly for a small country albeit with a capable military, such unacceptable scenario becomes debilitating.

The threat from radical Islam seeking to create a Middle East a la its rejectionist ideology, sans Israel and Western influence, also aims at destabilizing moderate Arab states such as Egypt and Jordan which signed peace treaties with Israel. Without a countervailing strong Iraq, Iran is now positioned for hegemony to restore its historic preeminence and emerge a global Muslim leader. It attempts to acquire nuclear power as a step in this envisioned goal while led by an irresponsible president who openly denies the Holocaust and calls for Israel's elimination. The Palestinian Authority as well as Lebanon stand to benefit from Israel's actions for their own future is held hostage by their extremists. Israel's response is supportive of America's heroic efforts to confront terrorism world-wide, painfully introducing democracy to a liberated Iraq, even though democracy's Arab enemies subvert fledgling democracies from within. Fighting terrorists is hampered by their planting themselves among civilians to take advantage of democratic nations' reluctance to retaliate at random. But terrorists underestimate the will of free nations to ultimately fight back in spite of limitations with inevitable and regrettable losses of life and property. Tragic indeed has been Lebanon's lot

and inability to control Palestinian and Lebanese militants who have begrudged her Western culture and delicate ethnic and religious balance.

How frustrating that despite Israel's sacrificial Gaza disengagement a year ago as well as the departure from southern Lebanon in 2000, with plans for the further withdrawal from the West Bank to create a Palestinian state, its adversaries refuse to respond in kind. Reestablishing a deteriorated deterrence posture is a must for Israel's security. Recently elected Israeli Premier Ehud Olmert is undergoing his first major test by fire, literally, filling in the big shoes of his incapacitated predecessor Ariel Sharon. Sharon, the daring leader in war and peace, would approve Olmert's conduct that is supported by a united political front, so otherwise rare, testimony to Israel's resolve to again prevail. A determined Jewish state has no plans to leave its bad neighborhood, and it may yet help transforming it with its essential American partner. May children on both sides of Israel's borders soon be able to freely play and sleep at peace.

Rabbi Israel Zoberman, spiritual leader of Congregation of Beth Chaverim in Virginia Beach, grew up in Haifa, Israel.

HONORING THE AMERICAN LEGION POST 71 FOR 86 YEARS OF SERVICE

HON. MICHAEL C. BURGESS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2006

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today so that I may honor the American Legion Post 71 of Denton, Texas as they celebrate their 86th Anniversary. For close to a century, the American Legion Post and its members have selflessly served thousands of veterans and their families throughout North Texas.

The American Legion, holding a 3 million part membership nationally, was chartered by Congress in the aftermath of World War I as a "patriotic, mutual-help, war-time veterans' organization." Since its establishment, the American Legion has sworn "to uphold and defend the Constitution of the United States of America; to maintain law and order; to foster and perpetuate a one hundred percent Americanism; to preserve the memories and incidents of our associations in the Great Wars;" to promote service and to harvest a healthy sense of community. Today there are over 15,000 posts world-wide.

In celebration of their 86th Anniversary, Post 71 will honor the family of Ernest Dallas Jr., a Denton Veteran of the Iraq War, with a "Fallen Heroes Memorial Plaque."

Mr. Speaker, I applaud American Legion Post 71 for their honorable service to our nation and our heroes. I also recognize one of those heroes, Ernest Dallas Jr., who lost his life in Iraq not more than a year ago. Our nation truly owes a debt of gratitude to him and our other fallen soldiers for their admirable and unyielding service to our nation.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TODD TIAHRT

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2006

Mr. TIAHRT. Mr. Speaker, on July 13, I was unavoidably detained and missed rollcall vote No. 374.

Rollcall vote No. 374 was on final passage of H.R. 9, the Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act Reauthorization and Amendments Act. Had I been present, I would have voted, "yea."

This is an important piece of legislation that I hope to see pass through the Senate, signed by the President and enacted.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. LOUISE McINTOSH SLAUGHTER

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 24, 2006

Ms. SLAUGHTER. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably detained on July 20, 2006 and missed Rollcall vote 393. Had I been present, I would have voted "aye" for 393.

CONDEMNING THE RECENT ATTACKS AGAINST THE STATE OF ISRAEL

SPEECH OF

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 19, 2006

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 921, condemning the provocations by terrorist organizations on Israel's northern and southern borders.

The actions of the terrorist organizations, Hezbollah, in Lebanon, and Hamas, in Gaza, against Israel are unconscionable. Instead of working towards peace, these terrorist organizations have chosen to perpetuate the violence. Unprovoked attacks on Israel's borders, murdering Israeli soldiers, taking Israeli hostages and showering rockets targeting and killing Israeli civilians are not furthering any legitimate goal.

I am pleased to see that many of the world's leaders have publicly recognized that the crisis in the Middle East was deliberately incited by terrorist organizations. I applaud the leaders of the world's top industrial nations' collaborative statement on July 16 condemning the terrorists: "These extremist elements and those that support them cannot be allowed to plunge the Middle East into chaos and provoke a wider conflict. The extremists must immediately halt their attacks."

I also congratulate the Arab nations, Saudi Arabia, Egypt and Jordan for their willingness to openly criticize Hezbollah's attacks on Israel's northern border. I am in full support of their efforts to speak out against Hezbollah's recent assaults against Israel.

Israel's actions over the past week must be viewed in a broader context. It should be recognized that in response to Israel's unilateral

withdrawal from Southern Lebanon in 2000 and from Gaza in 2005, as well as its committed plan to pull out completely from the West Bank, Israel has met only violence. Since 2000, Hezbollah has fired hundreds of rockets at civilian areas and kidnapped and murdered Israeli soldiers. Since September 2005, terrorist groups in Gaza have launched over 1,000 rocket attacks at Israeli cities. Previously, Israel exhibited restraint and refused to respond to these aggressions with any significant counterattack. Now, in light of the current unprovoked kidnappings by Hamas and Hezbollah, Israel is warranted to act appropriately to free the captured soldiers and to defend her citizens.

Now is the time for the Lebanese Government to abide by the U.N.'s rules. In refusing to disarm Hezbollah as required by U.N. Resolution 1559, the Lebanese Government is choosing to openly ignore the decree of the international community. Lebanese Prime Minister Fouad Siniora should accept responsibility and take immediate action against the terrorist group which Lebanon harbors. I support the resolutions that call on the United Nations to help the Prime Minister and his government to achieve these goals.

Now is also the time for the Hamas government to accept accountability for the actions of its terrorist organization. As the elected government of the Palestinian people, they have a duty to tell the terrorists to release the soldier they captured, halt the relentless rocket fire aimed at Israeli civilians and end their encouragement of terrorist acts against Israel.

But neither the Palestinian nor the Lebanese Government are wholly responsible for these recent provocations against Israel. There is a much greater strategic dimension to the Hamas-Hezbollah offensive. The terrorist organizations, Hezbollah and Hamas, are unquestionably sponsored and guided by the Iranian and Syrian Governments.

Iranian and Syrian support of these attacks will not be rewarded. The current bloodshed of innocent Israeli and Lebanese civilians will not strengthen their governments' positions. As sponsors of terror they will be condemned and held accountable for their actions.

Israel must have the right to defend her civilians from ongoing missile attacks, whether they arise from Lebanon or the Gaza Strip. Like the United States and other sovereign nations, Israel is justified in reestablishing its deterrent posture.

FANNIE LOU HAMER, ROSA PARKS, AND CORETTA SCOTT KING VOTING RIGHTS ACT REAUTHORIZATION AND AMENDMENTS ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 13, 2006

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 9) to amend the Voting Rights Act of 1965:

Ms. MCCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the Fannie Lou Hamer, Rosa Parks, and Coretta Scott King Voting Rights Act (H.R. 9). I am a proud co-